

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

The listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1. **(Currently Amended)** An implantable device for delivering a therapeutic agent into a vessel, the device comprising:

a stent having a plurality of tubular members, each tubular member being formed into a circumferential ring having a plurality of upper peaks and lower peaks, the lower peaks of one circumferential ring being coupled to the upper peaks of an adjacent circumferential ring, each tubular member having one or more hollow core sections and a multiplicity of pores providing fluid communication between the one or more hollow core sections and the external environment; and

a therapeutic agent ~~dispersed within a bioabsorbable polymer, the bioabsorbable polymer~~ contained in the one or more hollow core sections, wherein the therapeutic agent is configured to be eluted from the one or more hollow core sections into the vessel through the multiplicity of pores after implantation of the stent within the vessel, ~~the bioabsorbable polymer mediating the delivery of the therapeutic agent over an extended period of time.~~

2. **(Currently Amended)** The device of claim 1 wherein the one or more hollow core sections extend within at least a portion of each ~~the~~ circumferential ring[[s]].

3. **(Canceled)**

4. **(Canceled)**

5. **(Previously Presented)** The device of claim 1 wherein the multiplicity of pores are spaced apart at variable distances with respect to one another.

6. **(Previously Presented)** The device of claim 1 wherein the multiplicity of pores are disposed circumferentially about an exterior surface of the tubular member.

7. **(Original)** The device of claim 1 wherein the multiplicity of pores vary in size with respect to one another.

8. **(Original)** The device of claim 1 wherein the multiplicity of pores vary in shape with respect to one another

9.-14. **(Canceled)**

15. **(Currently Amended)** A method for manufacturing a stent for use in a vessel, the method comprising:

~~forming a first tubular member providing a plurality of tubes, each having one or more hollow core sections~~ into a first circumferential ring having a plurality of upper and lower peaks;

~~forming a second tubular member having one or more hollow core sections~~ into a second circumferential ring having a plurality of upper and lower peaks;

forming a multiplicity of pores in a lateral surface of each tubular member tube, the multiplicity of pores providing fluid communication between the one or more hollow core sections of each tubular member and the external environment;

~~forming each tube into a circumferential ring having a plurality of upper peaks and lower peaks;~~

forming a stent from the circumferential rings by coupling the lower peaks of the first one circumferential ring to the upper peaks of the second ~~an adjacent~~ circumferential ring; and

~~providing a therapeutic agent;~~

~~dispersing a the therapeutic agent within a bioabsorbable polymer having a composition that controls elution of the therapeutic agent by biodegrading over a predetermined period of time; and~~

loading a the therapeutic agent ~~and bioabsorbable polymer~~ into the one or more hollow core sections of each tubular member tube,

wherein the therapeutic agent is formulated to be retained within the one or more hollow core sections during delivery of the stent and thereafter eluted within the vessel ~~with a rate controlled by biodegradation of the bioabsorbable polymer.~~

16. **(Currently Amended)** The method of claim 15 wherein the therapeutic agent is inserted into a proximal opening of the tubular member, the proximal opening being tube in fluid communication with the one or more hollow core sections.

17. **(Currently Amended)** The method of claim 15 wherein the tubular members are tube ~~is~~ formed from a shape-memory alloy.

18.-20. **(Canceled)**

21. **(Currently Amended)** The method of claim 15 wherein the multiplicity of pores are disposed circumferentially about an exterior surface of each circumferential ring~~the tube~~.

22. **(Currently Amended)** The method of claim 15 wherein the multiplicity of pores are disposed at variable distances with respect to one another.

23. **(Previously Presented)** A method for delivering a therapeutic agent into a vessel, the method comprising:

providing a stent formed from a plurality of tubular members, each tubular member being formed into a circumferential ring having one or more hollow core sections with a therapeutic agent dispersed within a bioabsorbable polymer disposed therein and a multiplicity of pores providing fluid communication between the one or more hollow core sections and the external environment;

implanting the stent within the vessel; and

eluting the therapeutic agent from the one or more hollow core sections into the vessel through the multiplicity of pores by biodegradation of the bioabsorbable polymer, the bioabsorbable polymer mediating elution of the therapeutic agent over an extended period of time.

24. **(Canceled)**

25. **(Canceled)**

26. **(Previously Presented)** The device of claim 1, wherein a first circumferential ring contains a first therapeutic agent and a second circumferential ring contains a second therapeutic agent.

27. **(Previously Presented)** The device of claim 26, wherein the first circumferential ring and the second circumferential ring are coupled together in sequence to form at least a portion of the stent.

28. **(New)** The device of claim 1, wherein the stent is balloon expandable.

29. **(New)** The device of claim 1, wherein the therapeutic agent is dispersed within a bioabsorbable polymer configured to mediate the delivery of the therapeutic agent over an extended period of time.

30. **(New)** The method of claim 15, further comprising forming a third tubular member having one or more hollow core sections into a third circumferential ring having a plurality of upper peaks and lower peaks.

31. **(New)** The method of claim 15, wherein the therapeutic agent is dispersed within a bioabsorbable polymer.

32. **(New)** The device of claim 28, further comprising coupling the third circumferential ring to the first circumferential ring and/or second circumferential ring.